

The Noble KNIGHT'S

GARLAND.

In Four PARTS.

How a poor country ploughman, amongst many children, had one son, whom he well educated, and thereupon was beloved by many persons of quality, through his courteous carriage and behaviour.

I. How he lived in a noble family, where the Knight's daughter fell in love with him, and other things worthy of observation.

II. How they contrived a private marriage, under the pretence of a country journey, which was not known till she proved with child.

V. How the Knight finding his daughter had married the servant, ordered him to fetch his father and mother to partake of his great fortune.



Licensed and Entered according to Order.



The Noble KNIGHT'S GARLAND.



PART I.

BEhold near the borders of *Somersetshire*, (dear
Where labour is cheap friends, and money is
There liv'd a poor labouring thresher of corn,
Who in seven seasons had eight children born.

We needs must imagine that hard was his fare,
Who had such a charge to maintain by his care;
Yet he ne'er was known for to grieve at the same,
But still to his labour he chearfully came.

To *Billy* his eldest, such learning he gave,
That few in the country much better could have;
As being the darling and joy of his heart,
Of pleasing deportment in every part.

Both 'squires and other great persons of fame,
They lov'd and admir'd young *Billy* by name;
So sweet and so courteous he was in his ways,
That all that beheld him did speak in his praise.

At length among many that plac'd their delight
On *Billy*, it was a rich *Devonshire* Knight;
Who made him his servant, in order to wait
On him, for the sake of true honour and state.

He had not long been in service, before
His master's fair daughter began to adore,
Sweet *William*, who constantly was in her view,
Yet nevertheless it was more than he knew.

The

The folly of pride he did never affect,
 But shew'd himself humble in every respect,
 Both to the old Knight, and his daughter likewise,
 Behold it was *Cupid* that gained the prize.

While in silent night she was taking her rest,
 The innocent heart that was lodg'd in her breast,
 By love's fatal power was wounded so deep,
 That waking, she was obliged to weep.

She reason'd a while with herself as she lay,
 And said, I am wealthy, young, charming and gay,
 Admir'd by persons of honour and fame,
 And must I love *William*, poor *William* by name.

A man of mean parents who came from the plow,
 I'd willingly slight him, but cannot tell how;
 The more that I strive to forget him, I find,
 The deeper he's plac'd in my heart and my mind.

I find it a folly to strive against fate,
 The absolute power of love is so great,
 That all must surrender and freely comply,
 Where *Cupid* does conquer, and ah! so must I.

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## PART II.

**N**OW here is a strange and wonderful thing,  
 The which has a truth to the world I do bring;  
 Her lover and servant, sweet *William* it seems,  
 The very same night had the sweetest of Dreams.

He dream'd that his lady lay clasp'd in his arms,  
 While he had the honour to rattle her charms;  
 And with the freedom that love wou'd request,  
 He blush'd at the folly, and smote on his breast.

He



He turn'd on his pillow, and slumber'd again,  
 When part of his dream he did still entertain;  
 But with this addition he fancied a voice, (choice-  
 Said, arise now and court her, she's made thee hen

He was so concern'd at the dreams as he lay,  
 That *Billy* resolv'd the very next day,  
 To make observation, that so he might guess  
 What hope their would be of that great happiness.

As he had resolv'd, so did he proceed,  
 And in her fair eyes he could readily read,  
 The languishing effects of love and delight,  
 Which seem'd to favour the dreams of the night.

With that he presum'd to give her a kiss:  
 She answer'd, Pray, what is the meaning of this;  
 I needs must declare you are something too bold:  
 But soon she was pleas'd at Love-stories he told.

I needs must acknowledge, fair Lady, he cry'd,  
 That I am not worthy to make thee my Bride;  
 But Love, thy fair Beauty has wounded me so,  
 That I cannot live if you answer me No.

The beautiful lady she answer'd him straight,  
 Come *Billy*, what makes you to talk at this Rate?  
 What think you my honoured Father will say?  
 If you should delude his fair daughter away.

The Joy of his Heart, and his only Delight,  
 Thou know'st he's a man of great honour and might;  
 And think you that he will his Daughter bestow  
 Upon a poor Servant, you'll find it not so.

I needs must confess you are noble by birth,  
 And I but a servant the meanest on earth;  
 Yet nevertheless, by the powers above,  
 I'll hazard my life for the smiles of my love.

I have

I have not the power to go from my dear,  
 And so let thy father prove ne'er so severe;  
 Whatever befalls me, I'll patiently take,  
 And count it an honour to die for thy sake.

His words were so melting, that tears from her  
 eyes,  
 Did flow in abundance, and thus she replies,  
 I readily grant the thy earnest request,  
 And thou with the love of a lady art blest.

Then courteous embraces and kisses were free,  
 And that very minute they both did agree,  
 That they should be marry'd the very next day,  
 For they could not make any longer delay.



P A R T III.

**N**OW how they contriv'd for the wedding we  
 had,  
 She begg'd of her father that he'd be so kind,  
 To let her ride forth, a relation to see,  
 And likewise that *William* her guardian might be.

Her father immediately gave his consent,  
 Wherefore the next morning together they went,  
 To a little village, so marry'd they were  
 In private, no friend or relation was there.

That night at an Inn they tog-ber did lie,  
 Where love did afford them a happy supply  
 Of pleasure, and then the next morning by day,  
 To her near relations they posted away.

Now when to her friends and relations they came,  
 Behold this young beautiful lady of fame,

Was

Was highly respected, and *Billy* also,  
But they of the wedding full little did know.

Now when with her friends they had tarry'd a  
while,

The lady, she said, with an amorous smile,  
Come *Billy* now let us return home with speed,  
My father will think he has lost us indeed.

They mounted with speed and away they did ride,  
Sweet *William* and likewise his beautiful bride,  
Whose amorous charms he did dearly adore,  
Yet all was kept private for six months and more.

Then proving with child, which her father espy'd,  
Alas! she the marriage no longer could hide,  
But told him the truth then in every part,  
At which he was grieved and vext at the heart.

Said he, I'm offended at what you've done,  
Thou knowest I have never a daughter nor son,  
In all the whole world but thyself, I declare,  
Then why would you bring me to sorrow and care.

O what is the Reason, dear daughter, I pray,  
That thus you should cast yourself clearly away;  
Who might have been wedded with honour and  
fame,

I needs must declare you are highly to blame.

It is but a folly, dear father, to chide,  
If I had the choice of three kingdoms besides,  
There's none I could fancy but *Billy*, my Dear,  
And therefore, I pray you be of good Cheer.

To marry for Riches is folly indeed,  
To marry for honour much sorrow doth breed;  
This is my opinion and ever shall hold,  
That love is abundantly better than gold.

Have



Have we not abundance of riches in store,  
 With five or six thousand per annum or more,  
 Enough in all reason, the deed is well done;  
 I hope you will find him a dutiful son.



P A R T IV.

**H**ER honoured father was soon reconcil'd.  
 And call'd sweet *William*, saying, my dear child,  
 Go fetch thy poor parents from *Somersetshire*,  
 That they may partake of thy happiness here.

Since fortune has made thee my son, I declare,  
 I'd willingly take them from sorrow and care,  
 And bring them to live in a plentiful state,  
 For why should they labour and thou art so great.

Then *Billy* before him bow'd down to the ground,  
 Returning him thanks that such favour he found;  
 For his aged parents that were in distress,  
 For now they'd be placed in true happiness.

The coach was made ready for him and his bride,  
 Away to the place of his birth they did ride:  
 The first they beheld was his father at plough;  
 Said he, leave your labour and come with me now.

O where must I go thou fine fellow, youth he,  
 Thy face before now I never did see.  
 Yes, yes, but you have, for I am your own son,  
 Come leave off your labour, your work it is done.

And here's my young lady, thy daughter-in-law,  
 Then turning his head, his dear mother he saw.  
 As she was a wandering over the land,  
 He ran and he catch'd her fast hold by the hand.

New

Now while they were talking two Brothers came  
Then he to his parents did make this reply, (by,  
Leave all that you have to my brothers, said he,  
Step into the coach, you must both go with me.

They drove to the next town, and he cloath'd  
them both,  
And said my Dear parents, take notice henceforth,  
You shall be released from labour and care,  
And better apparel than this you shall wear.

With all expedition they came to the town  
Of Exeter, where the old knight of renown,  
Stood patiently waiting to welcome his guests,  
And did at their coming much kindness express.

Thou'rt welcome dear brother and sister, said he,  
The rest of your days you shall spend with me,  
Where peace, joy, and plenty you ever shall have,  
That so you may quietly go to the grave.

They heartily thanked their brother the knight,  
Who crowned their days with such joy and delight,  
And all for the sake of a fortunate son,  
Because he the love of his daughter had won.

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O where dost thou live, I say, death he,  
Till I see before now I never did see,  
Yes, yes, but you have, for I am your own son,  
Come leave off your labour, your work it is done.

And here's my hand, my hand is in law,  
Then turning his head, his hand he laid  
As he was a witness over the land,  
He ran and he catch'd a tall bird by the hand.

Now